

223

~~217~~-229 East Main Street (Bierck-Heuse
Commercial Block)
223-229 East Main Street
Madison
Jefferson County
Indiana

HABS No. IN-134 C

HABS
IND,
39-MAD,
30-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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(Bierck-Heuse Commercial Block)

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Location: 223-229 East Main Street, Madison, Jefferson County,
Indiana

Present Owner: 223: Madison First Federal Bank
225: " " " "
227: Russell and Marie Wheeler
229: Rose Murphy

Present Occupant: 223: Rain's Hardware
225: None
227: Wheeler's Barber Shop and tenants
229: Rose's Apparel and tenants

Present Use: Commerical and residential

Significance: Excellent surviving examples of mid-to-late nineteenth
century commerical architecture, this block of four stores
was built with a continuous facade and cast-iron
storefronts, of which only one survives.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of erection: 1880-1881. This continuous block of four commercial houses was built for Peter Bierck, Otto Heuse, Sr., and Otto Heuse, Jr. The Tax Lists of the City of Madison show a marked increase in the assessed value of this property from 1880 to 1881.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The legal description of the property is part of Lot 63 in the Original Plat (Old Town) in the City of Madison, Indiana. The following deed references may be located in the Recorder's Office at the Jefferson County Courthouse, Madison, Indiana.

223 East Main Street

1879 Warranty Deed, dated May 23, 1879; recorded in Deed Book 42, page 186 on May 25, 1879. Simeon and Martha Hunt, and Kate Hunt, heirs at law to the estate of Leavenworth Hunt, deceased, sold the title of the property to Peter Bierck for the consideration of \$2500.

- 1909 Quit Claim Deed, dated July 21, 1909; recorded in Deed Book 81, pages 408-410 on August 4, 1909. The Executors of the estate of Peter Bierck conveyed the title of the property to William A. Bierck for \$1.00 and other considerations.
- 1909 Warranty Deed, dated August 2, 1909; recorded in Deed Book 81, page 438 on August 26, 1909. William A. and Emma Bierck sold the property to the Madison Safe Deposit and Trust Company for \$4000.
- 1920 Quit Claim Deed, dated July 15, 1920; recorded in Deed Book 91, page 131 on July 15, 1920. The Directors of the Madison Safe Deposit and Trust Company conveyed the property to William A. Bierck for \$1.00 and other considerations.
- 1950 Warranty Deed, dated March 7, 1950; recorded in Deed Book 116, page 383 on March 7, 1950. William A. Bierck sold the property to Elanor Bierck, his daughter, for \$1.00 and a life estate in the property.
- 1972 Warranty Deed, dated January 21, 1972; recorded in Deed Book 156, page 136 on February 3, 1972. Elanor Bierck, sole heir to the estate of William A. Bierck, sold the property to the Madison First Federal Bank for \$1.00 and other considerations. William A. Bierck died on December 14, 1971.

225 East Main Street

- 1865 Warranty Deed, dated October 3, 1865; recorded in Deed Book 27, page 161 on October 23, 1865. Otto and Catharina Heuse sold the title to the property, being 16 feet 4 inches on the north line of East Main Street, to Peter Bierck for \$3,300, with the stipulation that no intoxicating liquors be sold on the property.
- 1911 Conveyance Deed, dated October 2, 1911; recorded in Deed Book 83, page 361 on October 3, 1911. William A. Bierck and Clemens Hunger, executors of the estate of Peter Bierck, conveyed the property to Edward S. Coyle for \$2800.

227 East Main Street

- 1877 Warranty Deed, dated September 15, 1877, recorded in Deed Book 37, page 497 on September 15, 1871. Otto Heuse, Sr. and his wife Catharina sold the title of the property to Otto Heuse, Jr., for \$1.00 and natural love and devotion.

- 1921 Warranty Deed, dated March 17, 1921; recorded in Deed Book 91, page 401 on March 17, 1921. Otto Heuse, Jr. and Carrie, his wife, sold the title to the property to Edward S. Coyle for \$2850.

229 East Main Street

- 1870 Warranty Deed, dated January 7, 1870; recorded in Deed Book 32, page 127-128 on January 12, 1870. Dr. Howard C. and Prudence Watts sold the title to the property, being 19 feet on the north line of East Main Street to Otto Heuse, Sr. for \$2500.00.
- 1885 Decree of the Last Will and Testament of Otto Heuse, Sr., dated April 21, 1885; recorded in Will Book 1, page 5, on July 20, 1892. In his Last Will and Testament, Otto Heuse, Sr. named Otto Heuse, Jr. as his heir at law to his real and personal property, which included the title to this property.
- 1902 Warranty Deed, dated December 2, 1902; recorded in Deed Book 73, pages 30-51, on December 2, 1902. Otto and Carrie Heuse, Jr. sold the title to the property to Edward S. Coyle for \$2750.

225, 227, 229 East Main Street

- 1927 Decree of the Last Will and Testament of Edward S. Coyle, dated December 17, 1927; recorded in Will Book 3, page 220, on May 8, 1931. In his Last Will and Testament, Edward S. Coyle named Elizabeth M. O'Connor as his heir at law to his real and personal estate of which the title to this property was a part.
- 1930 Decree of the Last Will and Testament of Elizabeth M. O'Connor, dated January 11, 1930; recorded in Will Book 3, page 234-235, on November 18, 1931. In her Last Will and Testament, Elizabeth M. O'Connor named Harry M. and Charles J. Lustig as the heir at law to her real and personal property of which the title to this property was a part.

The Lustigs eventually sold the building to different owners at different times.

4. Original plans and construction: The original cast-iron storefront is still in place on 227 East Main Street. It was manufactured by the firm of "B. Bush and Sons, Columbus, Ohio."

The first floor of each building is simply a long and narrow room used for retail business. The upper floor was originally a single open room, usable for further commercial space, or for the storage of stock for the store below.

5. Alterations and additions: The major alterations to these structures have been the removal of the cast-iron storefronts on 223, 225, and 229. The first floor retail space has been shortened by the addition of partitions in 225, 227, and 229.

- B. Historical Context: Unusual is the fact that the building was constructed through the cooperation of two business families, the Biercks and the Heuses. This type of continuous front building is unusual to Madison, and the cooperation of the three property owners in its construction is quite singular.

Peter Bierck was a harnessmaker and saddler, who was born in Beckining, Germany, on January 24, 1834. Upon moving to Madison in 1858, Bierck worked in the saddlery of "Mr. Kinsley" for two years before starting his own business in 1860. In 1865, he purchased the property on which the building at 225 now stands and ran his saddlery there until construction of the present structure in 1880-1881. When it was completed, Bierck located his business in the commercial storefront next door at 223 East Main. Bierck then maintained 225 as a rental property. Early businesses located at 225 included Charles Dietz, a dealer in china, glass, pianos, organs, toys, and "wood and willowware." By 1909, Dietz had closed his business at this location, and the store was occupied by Bilz and Kalb, who maintained the "Enterprise Meat Market" for a number of years at this address. Peter Bierck maintained his business at 223 until 1905, when his son, William A. Bierck, took over the business upon his father's retirement. Peter Bierck died on June 25, 1908.

Otto Heuse, Sr. was born in Prussia in either 1815 or 1818, and had moved to Madison by 1856. Soon after, Heuse began his business dealing in hides, leather, furs, boots, shoes and uppers, and by 1880 was quite successful. Heuse had established his business in a building on the site of the present 227 East Main, and re-established his business there upon the completion of the building in 1881.

He was joined by his son, Otto, Jr. The younger Heuse had worked in his father's store for many years, and was listed at age 14 as a clerk in his father's store in the 1870 census. By the time this structure was complete, the younger Heuse had more or less become an official partner in his father's business. Upon the death of his father on December 30, 1891, the younger Heuse continued the business until 1921 when he sold the property and moved from Madison.

The store at 229 East Main was owned by Heuse and was used as a rental property. Early occupants of this store included Charles Bleichart's saloon and restaurant in 1887, which had been replaced by T. H. Biggins as a saloon by 1890. By 1909, the store was being used by E. and G. Schad of Eberhardt and Grant, harnessmakers.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

- a. Tax Lists and Assessments of the City of Madison, Indiana, 1875-1885. These records are presently maintained in the basement of the City Hall, Madison, Indiana.

2. Secondary and published sources:

- a. Directories of the City of Madison.
- b. Madison Daily Courier: October 30, 1891; December 30, 1891; June 25, 1908; August 6, 1908.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A block of four commercial buildings with a continuous facade and cast-iron storefronts of which one survives.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Each building is three stories and has a three-bay front.

223: 18'-9" x 83'-9"
225: 15'-7" x 61'-0"
227: 15'-0" x 55'-11"
229: 19'-5" x 55'-11"

2. Foundation: Stone.
3. Walls: Common-bond brick, painted.
4. Structural system, framing: Load-bearing brick walls with wood framing.

5. Chimneys: Brick chimneys with projecting bands of two courses below the top three courses of brick.
 6. Openings:
 - a. Storefronts: The storefronts of 223, 225, and 229 have been altered. The original storefront, remaining on 227, has a round, fluted cast-iron column on each side of the entrance with a tall decorated cast-iron base and an ornate capital. There is a flat, fluted cast-iron pilaster at each side of the storefront with a block capital. These columns and pilasters support an architrave that has a bracket above each column and pilaster, forming a panel in between. The doorway has wooden surrounds, a wood panel door with a glass panel and a transom window that is painted over. There is a fixed glass display window on each side of the center entrance. There is a metal awning extending across the front of the building at the transom level.
 - b. Doorways and doors: A doorway in the north rear wall of each building has wooden surrounds, wooden threshold and sill.
 - c. Windows: Second and third-floor windows have two-over-two-light double-hung sash, with wooden surrounds and stone sills with simple brackets below them. There are metal hood molds with brackets and embellished keystones projecting above the hoods.
 7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The shed roof has a standing seam metal covering.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: The boxed metal cornice across the front has brackets and modillions.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Floor plans:
 - a. Cellar: The cellar under the building at 223 has a vault under the sidewalk in front. This vault has stone barrel-vault ceiling, and an earth floor. The cellar has a concrete floor. There are two large brick arched walls near the rear of the cellar. The cellar is used for display and the vault houses oil tanks.
 - b. First floor: The originally open retail space has been partitioned in 225, 227, and 229.

- c. Second floor: In 223, there is a large opening in the floor, forming a balcony at the second floor, opening to the first floor. The remainder of the second floor is one room that is vacant. In 225, the second floor has three rooms, one behind the other. The second floors of 227 and 229 were not accessible.
 - d. Third floor: In 223, the third floor is one large space. In 225, it is similar to 225's second floor. The third floors of 227 and 229 were not accessible.
- 2. Stairways: In 223, the stairway to the second floor is in an open well and has a wooden open-string stair with iron pipe railing. The wooden stair to the third floor is enclosed, with an open well at the top. In 225 and 227, the stairways are enclosed.
 - 3. Flooring: The floors are covered with a variety of linoleums, carpets, asphalt tiles, and vinyl-asbestos tiles.
 - 4. Walls and ceiling finish: Plaster walls and ceilings, painted and wall papered.
 - 5. Doorways and doors: Wooden panel doors have wooden surrounds.
 - 6. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: Forced air heating system in 223, 225, and 229; space heating in 227.
 - b. Lighting: Modern lighting fixtures.
- D. Site: The block faces south on the north side of the street, comprising part of a harmonious commercial streetscape.

Prepared by: John P. White
Project Supervisor
July 1978

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with Historic Madison, Inc., and the Indiana Historical Society. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief, H.A.B.S., and Kenneth L. Anderson, Jr., Principal Architect, the project was completed during the summer of 1978 at the Historic American Buildings Survey Field Office, Madison, Indiana, by John P. White, Project Supervisor (Associate Professor, Texas Tech University); John Hopkins, Project Historian (Skidmore College);

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and Student Assistant Architects Richard Berlinger (Rhode Island School of Design); Jon Lourie (University of Maryland); Eric Swanson (Rensseler Polytechnic Institute); and Peter Whitehead (State University of New York at Buffalo). The written data were edited by Alison K. Hoagland, HABS Historian, in December, 1984.